According to the information furnished by the Super Bazar, Delhi, the value of the damaged stocks as on 31st March, 1996 was Rs. 1,27,454.15.

(b) and (c) The damaged stocks are more in the groceries and toiletries Departments of Super Bazar. In order to avoid its accumulation, the Super Bazar takes regular steps to get these damaged stocks replaced from the suppliers.

Killing of Rhino

510. DR. PRABIN CHANDRA SARMA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "Rhino killed in Assam" appearing in the 'Pioneer', dated the 24 September, 1996;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether poaching has come down in Assam;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the concrete steps taken/being taken by the Government to arrest poaching completely ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Chief Wildlife Warden of Assam has informed that during 1996, a total of four rhinos were killed by poachers in the Pabitora Sanctuary in Assam. However, Constant vigil is being maintained through dry and night patrolling by wildlife staff, armed Home Guards and Assam Forest Protection Force battalion to control the poaching of rhinos.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. As compared to 70 rhino killed by poachers in Assam during 1993 the number in 1996 was only 40.

(e) The steps taken by the Government for protection and Conservation of rhinos are given below :

(i) Rhino is placed in Schedule I of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 thus getting the highest level of protection against hunting and commercial exploitation.

(ii) India is a party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and abides by the regulations of International trade in endangered species of animals and articles made thereof. Under the provisions of the convention, rhino is placed under Appendix I of CITES which bans international trade in the species, products and derivatives.

(iii) Cooperation of Police, BSF, DRI, Customs, Army and other enforcement agencies is also taken, as and when required, in apprehending the poachers and illegal traders.

(iv) With a view to providing alternative home for Rhinos and also rehabilitating them in their erstwhile habitat programme for 'Rehabilitation of Rhinos' has been started in Dudhwa National Park and Katerniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary of Uttar Pradesh.

(v) A network of 5 Wildlife sanctuaries and 4 national parks has been set up for conservation of the species and its habitat. Financial assistance is provided by the Central Government for development of these national parks and sanctuaries, on request from the State Governments.

(vi) There is a scheme for payment of rewards to the informers, which among other things, helps in getting intelligence regarding smuggling of wildlife products.

Development of Livestock

511. SHRI BHIM PRASAD DAHAL : Will the Minister of ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any specific request for pilot project to develop livestock as a major means of livelihood for the people for hilly areas including Sikkim, Darjeeling and Arunachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAGHUVANS PRASAD SINGH) (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of answer to (a) above.

Shortage of Urea in Andhra Pradesh

512. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is acute shortage of Urea in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the reaons therefor;

(c) whether State Government has been requesting the Union Government since 1995 to supply additional quota of urea to meet its demand;

(d) if so, the steps taken by Govenment in this regard;

(e) the total supply made during 1996 and likely to be made in 1997; and

(f) the reasons for the short supply of the urea, if any ?